<b>Neologisms
<p>
<b>Natalie Jeremijenko

<p>
<b>February 29th to April 8th, 2000
<p>Opening Reception: Tuesday, February 29th, 2000
<p>6 to 8 p.m.

<b>STOREFRONT FOR ART AND ARCHITECTURE
<p>97 Kenmare Street New York NY 10012

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Storefront for Art and Architecture

97 Kenmare Street New York, NY 10012
tel 212 431 5795 fax 212 431 5755
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Gallery Hours
Wednesday—Saturday 12–6 PM

Admission
Admission to the gallery is free.

Directions
Storefront is located at the corner of Kenmare Street and Cleveland Place, near Lafeyette Street one block south of Spring Street.

Trains: 6 to Spring Street, N/R to Prince Street & B/D/F/Q to Broadway/Lafayette.

Mission
Founded in 1982, Storefront for Art and Architecture is a nonprofit organization committed to the advancement of innovative positions in architecture, art and design.

Funding
Storefront for Art and Architecture is supported by The Stephen A. and Diana L. Goldberg Foundation, The Greenwall Foundation, The Jerome Foundation, The Rockefeller Foundation, The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, New York State Council on the Arts, National Endowment for the Arts, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, and Friends.

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It is oxymoronic to look up neologisms in the dictionary because they are not yet there. Otherwise they would not be neologisms. But if you do, and you would probably do it online, you would :

Type in your word or phrase and click Search. Click on HELP for search tips.

Main Entry: ne·ol·o·gism
Pronunciation: nE-'ä-l&-"ji-z&m
Function: noun
Etymology: French néologisme, from ne- + log- + -isme -ism
Date: 1800
1 : a new word, usage, or expression
2 : a meaningless word coined by a psychotic
ne·ol·o·gis·tic /-"ä-l&-'jis-tik/ adjective

There are two reasons to step you thru this, neither of which is to appeal to the authority of the (internet) dictionary meaning. One is to show you how 'Search' and 'HELP' have become buttons, i.e. that they are simultaneously a word and a function, literary and instrumental. The second is to capitalize on the 2nd meaning of the word, as it teeters between sense and nonsense, or e-sense and technonsense. This contradiction is the heuristic for this collection of projects. It points at where meaning is not yet stabilized in the new new things.

In neologisms the relationship being framed is that of technology to language and hence to meaning. The form of address is a novel logos as the language of technology and the technologies of language inflect each other. You assume that technological innovation is 'technological' innovation, technically driven. You may believe that progress is wrought by the rational improvements and market optimization of instrumental technologies. Yet, you concede that there is necessarily social innovation that precede, determines, or accompanies it. Technological innovation cannot be independent of rethinking social roles. Secret handshakes, special passwords and the all American anti immigrant sentiment can be embodied in information technologies... neither neutral nor immune. Think of what roles could be recast. You know that Russian technology looks different. But it is not this level of nation state material culture. You, user, are much more complicit than that view would suggest. You are user, you are being configured. You recognize in each device the marvelous inscribing of understanding, recognition and social function embodied in the physical, and in the imaginary space.

New technologies present an opportunity for change...whether or not we design it.

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Digital media has been introduced into your imagination as an immaterial phenomenon. The virtual is precisely not physical. Because it is immaterial,it is a medium of instantaneous communication and seamless connections. It is a metamedia that pretends to be all media -- able to be merged with every other media: webTV; e-commerce; teledildonics - in which everything can take place, chatting, dating, reinventing your identity, creating new knowledge, new legal wealth, and neologisms that all start with e -- e-same.

You buy it. You are part of the digital revolution. You are part of the information age. You are the information age. Ad copy speaks to you.

However, at the same time, you know that it is a consensual hallucination that digital space is, firstly, a space, and secondly, that it is, in fact, virtual. You know though it is endlessly re-writeable ones and zeroes, non-physical stuff, those toxic capacitors in the 9 month product life machines are a problem. You know there is more superfund toxic cleanup sites in Silicon Valley than any other comparable area. You know that this clean immateriality is as much production of corporate interests as the products. You enjoy the complicit irony of it all.

You know the uses of information technologies and how they shape and are shaped by social expectations. You count, you vote with your wallet...even as a consumer. You know these new new things take the social institutions, the way you do something and turns it into a product. This is the information revolution.

IT

IT, in the world of fortunate acronyms, stands for Information Technology. It is ITs capacity to act like 'it': a semantic blank holding the subject position for an actual subject. As in: it happens that, it's true that, it is impossible to say, it would seem so, it downloads onto here', a minimal blank filling the subject slot with no shred of pronominal reference. It functions much like an impersonal verb like the 'there' in there is a program to do that. It fills the subject position so that the actual information can keep the role of a predicate.

IT, in the material language of social institutions, acts as a blank, a given, without revealing the decisions and mechanisms which make it an actual social agent. There it defines the very terms and categories in which the society is defined, the very information that counts in arguments to determine public priority, to define what you need, to project into the future. Calling information technology IT makes it disappear.

NEOLOGISMS

In the social imaginary the ubiquity of computing technologies is implemented with screens everywhere. Your screen is held as portal to the new world, abandoning the specific processes that are in relation to spatial form and organization, and configuring you to only design the interface that separate the two realms. You do not reprogram the functionality. You do what your pulldown menus tell you.

In neologisms you find projects to explore implications of IT, information technologies. Physical implications -- not whether there are physical implications of digital technology, nor if there might be physical consequences -- and social and spatial determinism of IT.

The neologistics include personal prepositions and public propositions: RealTime on the material of time and the stuff of memory and Neologues on the performative and the instrumental.

REALTIME

Repeating things is in everyone, in everyone their being and their feeling and their way of realizing everything and everyone comes out of them in repeating... slowly everyone in a continuous repeating to their minutest variation, comes to be clearer to someone. Gertrude Stein

RealTime is a project that puts digital memory somewhere. And somewhere where you know where it is. The piece consists of a microphone and a speaker, embedded into the wall of the space. It is as permanent as the wall. The microphone records sound and the speaker plays, just as you would expect. However, there is exactly one year between the recording and the playing. One year after you were there in the space, speaking, making noise, it will play it back.

Realtime is built into the space and becomes part of the infrastructure of the site...part of the art that is life. It uses a parabolic dish microphone which is essentially a mirror telescope for sound. A parabolic surface has the interesting property that all sound waves that propagate parallel its central axis travel the same distance to get to its focus. Aligning the dish along the axis of the Storefront gallery (it is almost all on-axis) picks up sound from everything that is aligned with the focus of the parabolic dish and converges it toward the focus in phase--with its pressure peaks and troughs synchronized so that they work together to make the loudest possible sound vibrations.

At 16bit 44Khz, one year becomes a storage problem of about 300 Gb.

This piece exploits compression algorithms designed to get sound out to modems. It also exploits inexpensive disk storage media driven by memory hungry encyclopedic storage projects - from nonlinear video editing, to the human genome project, to data warehousing, to 3d rendered architectural walk-thrus. These great engineering projects of our time subsidize the fortunate synchronicity between the desire and the availability of increasingly more disk space. However it is not a project enabled by the digital media, it could have been done with other technical means. It is a project that makes sense because of the current technological condition, because of the disk-envy, in so much as it contrasts to the fabricated placelessness fabricated by virtual architectures. RealTime uses the same disk-envy to reinforce the particular wall at Storefront, as its structural beams reinforce its spatiality. It reinforces its continuity, and the rhythm of revisiting it -- engineering the socio-structural, in case you forget what this place is for.

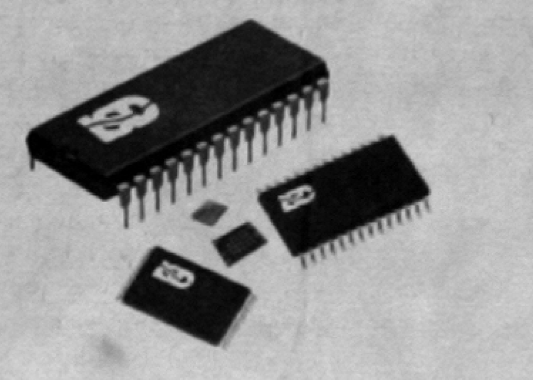
The project is installed on the leap day adjustments when the time has suddenly become arbitrary. When you watched the ball drop in Times Square, the years suddenly summed to zero. You were without delusions that it was meaningful, at ease with the arbitrariness of it all. Yet the synchronicity was compelling.

But time is stuff too, with its own material properties. As you tuck it into places here and there, what you are saying and doing -- those indelible acts of yours -- is that stuff. Synchronicity reveals the extent to which your social order relies on the systems implemented in hundreds of wonderfully incompatible systems each with an independent clock. Because you keep your clock to the right time as much as it you. Each and every microprocessor is a clock. With a proliferating incommensurability between your banks file transfer protocol, your health club, and you busy resetting your clocks, ever generating work for the 'knowledge workers'. It is a strange compensation for you who earnestly worried about technologies of automation replacing workers.

NOTA BENE: There is now a society for the preservation of public clocks.

NEOLOGUES

Neologues is a project that marks a moment we start addressing our devices with our voice. Exploiting digital signal processing integrated onto a low-power chip, manufacturers are embedding voice recognition functionality - a voice recognition engine optimized for feature extraction and real-time acoustic search - in your cell phones; personal digital assistants; language translators; and so on. The probability models available for use in speech recognition and understanding has expanded significantly.



ISD-SR3000 Embedded Speech Recognition Engine for example command and control applications, released late 1999, is implemented in a Panasonic cell phone among other products

Addressing your computer was a well worn image long before it became a viable product, because the computer has often been cast as artificially intelligent. This is significantly different from voice recognition in the wild. Small hybrid products recognizing you.

These chips might also do some of the hard work of making sense of human-technological relationships. By asking you to explicitly address your devices, you are made to say out loud what you want to communicate to this thing. This speech act transforms it from the neutral tool to playing a social role. But this is a transitional moment, still fresh and perhaps fleeting. Previous generations of voice chips have been dumb. They have not listened and have not responded directly to anyone. They said what we already knew, not contingent on any social interaction -- what we said back meant little. A female voice on the domesticated inside-of-your-car to gently remind you to turn off the headlights and a male voice integrated into the exterior alarm system, blurted warnings to stand back. This new generation of chip implementations may also disappear, or become ubiquitous -- in both cases they will become invisible.

To address someone or something one has to at least for a moment think about who or what one is addressing. More than being spoken to, speaking to someone/thing requires you formulate your social position (at least the performance of one). When you use your voice to detonate an act, albeit a technological one, your words become consequential. You talk to something. You call out and address the agency, the social role, embedded with in the thing. IT takes two to talk.

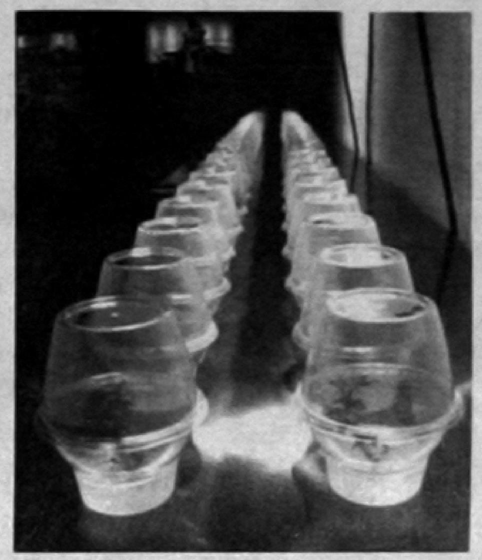
There is no elevator in the Storefront but for your purposes there is now. You understand upwardly-ness. This elevator only operates if indeed you state 'up' or 'down' in Spanish. You are better than a mono-anglo-phone but your pronunciation must be correct. Do you address the service technology in spanish in GAAT / NAFTA? To operate the light, the expectant switch you address as 'light' with double entendre, and it flicks deferentially. You feel good to be right. But it does not know the clause/tense you were using and the light does not go on. The bulb you understand to address separately, say 'Click' and it will 'on' itself, pleased to have you impersonate it, it has configured you as dumb 'switch'.

There are others that you don't know...you will know what to say.

Your world is operated by passwords, personal alphanumeric strings as prayers to shield your privacy. You believe it is in jeopardy. These passwords are meaningful to you, at least memorable -- but if someone knows your partner's birthday and your children's middle names they have probably gotten access to your files, and can know all of your lunch appointments. Your personal is unsurprising, our files not that interesting. Your vulnerability to imagined and actual threats is cowardly guarded only by your daughter's birthday. You know decoding is not algorithmic.

The novel product move here is to instrument diversity. Used in security applications it is one example of the difference between consumers being exploited as opposed to their sameness. However you are in the information age and you prickle with the expectation and value of your internet stock. You are expecting 'smarts' to multiply. You are, however, demographically consistent and appropriately concerned for the environment. For instance the Energy Consumption Meter, you expect will be smart. The product literature promises that it will coordinate with your dishwasher to run it in off peak cycles. But the face of the meter does not care if you know. A nice interface design makes it look accurate: a shiny military precision case, countersunk screws in funky new millennia militia look or retro-Soviet look. The meter as you knew it, however, is about displaying itself mostly to no-one. Your relationship, however is presumably about knowing your level of power consumption (or at least measuring). It is about having an idea of what is going on. The proposed power consumption meter is blank. It is blank display. You know what it is for. You know that it is your energy consumption meter. You put it there. It does display, however, when/that you know. Its functionality is that if you get the first digit right, the exact consumption will display...You need to know that you are consuming about 10 MW/hr... And if you get the first order of magnitude correct, if you are just in the 10'7 watt ball park, then it will reward you and provide the information you thought you knew. If you say 10 it will display 10,768,024...but if you say 9 or 11 or any other number it will remain entirely blank displaying your not knowing. Look to the dial for confirmation, reassurance, not information.

These neologues instrument your question. What do you say? This exhibit is a demo. You can get your neologues now, and you will have them installed for you -- anywhere you like between you and your things. This begins a project to record how these technologized speech acts script you, or vice versa. You will have the pleasure of knowing what you will say. So contact the Storefront to get some to deploy.



OneTree
the growth responses of trees is a history we can read

Cloning has made it possible to Xerox copy organic life and fundamentally confound the traditional understanding of individualism and authenticity. In the public sphere genetics is often reduced to 'finding the gene for .... (fill in the blank)', misrepresenting the complex interactions with environmental influences. The swelling cultural debate that contrasts genetic determinism and environmental influence has consequences for understanding our own agency in the world, be it predetermined by genetic inevitability or constructed by our actions and environment. The OneTree project is a forum for public involvement in this debate, a shared experience with actual material consequences.

OneTree, is actually one hundred tree(s), clones, micro-propagated in culture. The clones, were exhibited together as plantlets at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco. This was the only time they were seen together. In spring 2001 the clones will be planted in public sites throughout the San Francisco Bay Area including: Golden Gate Park; 220 fronting property owners; SF School Districts; BART station (to be confirmed); Yerba Buena Performing Arts Center; Union Square (tbc). A selection of international sites are also being negotiated. Friends of the Urban Forest will coordinate the planting.

Because the trees are biologically identical, in the subsequent years they will render the social and environmental differences to which they are exposed. The tree(s) slow and consistent growth will record the experiences and contingencies that each public site provides. They will become a networked instrument that maps the micro climates of the Bay Area, not connected via the Internet, but through their biological materiality. Each of the tree(s) will be compared by viewers in the public places they are planted, to become a demonstration, a long, quiet and persisting spectacle of the Bay Area's diverse environment.

The artificial life component of the project consists of tree growth algorithms (L-systems) that will be distributed on the CD-ROM, MUTATE, with other software. The growth rate and branching patterns of the modeled trees are controlled by a CO2 sensor (distributed with the CD-ROM) at the serial port of the local computer, puncturing the separation between virtual/digital and the actual environment. The opportunity to contrast the idealized computer models of the algorithmic trees and actual complex growth phenomena are facilitated by the OneTree web site where the trees, biological and algorithmic, will be assembled in an impossible geography.